When veracity is complete, the Yogee becomes the focus for the Karma resulting from
l works, good or bad. —PATANJALI

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INSTRUCTION FROM CYCLES

THE distinctive hallmark of Theosophy, wherever and whenever it has appeared, is always the promise of knowledge—spiritual knowledge—by means of which all problems, diffiulties, confinements and sufferings may be overcome. This is the eaching of the *Bhagavad-Gita,* of all the instructors and saviors of ankind. The discipline of the aspirant's life, as the *Gita* points out, the means by which spiritual knowledge may be gained. And this ath of devotion is again defined by the Three Objects of the presnt-day Theosophical Movement.

Yet it is natural to ask how "knowledge" can be of service in retion to the chaotic conditions of a world like ours, where so many estructive currents seem to be gaining strength. The possible anvers to such a question are doubtless many, but an immediately eartening one may result from consideration of the Theosophic aching of the law of cycles. Knowledge of cycles provides perspecve on the impact of events, since events are, so to say, the markers cyclic change and development—or decline, as the case may be.

It was the peculiar talent of Mr. Judge to offer explanations in mple terms, and he often addressed himself, in his articles in the *ath,* to just such questions as the above query. Two of his discusons of cycles—one an article called "The Signs of This Cycle," hich he published in the *Path* for October, 1892, the other the reort of a talk he gave before the New York branch of the Theophical Society in 1889 (printed in the *Path* for December of that ar), titled "Cycles"—seem as though they had been composed

as much for our time as for his. In "The Signs of This Cycle," Mr. Judge examined the impact of current events (in 1892) against the background of the Theosophical teaching of the character of the cycle known as Kali Yuga. What he said was in striking contrast to the confidence and optimism of the Victorian Age, yet it was applicable both then and now—and, one may add, more generally acceptable today, since the qualities of the Kali Yuga are far more evident than they were some eighty years ago.

He first explains why the Kali Yuga is regarded as "black" or dark:

> It is dark because spirituality is almost obscured by materiality and pure intellectualism. Revolving in the depth of material things and governed chiefly by the mind apart from spirit, its characteristic gain is physical and material progress, its distinguishing loss is in spirituality. In this sense it is the Kali Yuga. For the Theosophist in all ages has regarded loss of spirituality as equivalent to the state of death or darkness; and mere material progress in itself is not a sign of real advancement, but may have in it the elements for its own stoppage and destruction. Pre-eminently this age has all these characteristics in the Western civilizations. We have very great progress to note in conquests of nature, in mechanical arts, in the ability to pander to love of luxury, in immense advancements with wonderful precision and power in the weapons made for destroying life. But side by side with these we have wretchedness, squalor, discontent, and crime; very great wealth in the hands of the few, and very grinding poverty overcoming the many.
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> As intellectualism is the ruler over this progress in material things, we must next consider the common people, so called, who have escaped from the chains which bound them so long. They are not exempt from the general law, and hence, having been freed, they feel more keenly the grinding of the chains of circumstance, and therefore the next characteristic of the cycle—among human beings—is *unrest*.

It may be noted that, in an article of little more than a page and a half, Mr. Judge provides apt characterization to the psychodynamics of the present scene, very nearly the world over, including even what scholars and others have come to call "the revolution of rising expectations." And "unrest" is surely the term which applies to the social conditions of the present. Then, after speaking of some of the typical social conflicts and disturbances of the late nineteenth century, Mr. Judge says:

> We are not dealing with the rights or the wrongs of either side in these struggles, but only referring to the facts. They are some of the moral signs of our cycle, and they go to prove the prognos-

> tications of the Theosophist about the moral, mental, and physical unrest. The earth herself has been showing signs of disturbance, with an island blown up in one place, long inactive volcanoes again erupting, earthquakes in unaccustomed places such as Wales and Cornwall. All these are signs. The cycle is closing, and everywhere unrest will prevail. As lands will disappear or be changed, so in like manner ideas will alter among men. And, as our civilization is based on force and devoid of a true philosophical basis, the newest race—in America—will more quickly than any other show the effect of false teachings and corrupted religion.

In the earlier *Path* article, titled simply "Cycles," Mr. Judge provides what may be regarded as a more complex analysis of the confusion and turbulence of the age. He deals, for example, with the probable cause of the obscuration of spirituality in the present, quoting from *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B.'s statements about the loss of the "third eye" as a result of the Atlantean sin, and her comment that "in those days the heaviest Karma of the fifth race was generated by our Monads." (II, 302.) This throws a light on the determined materialism of so many influential thinkers. On the other hand, the law of cycles also brings an understanding of the ameliorating influences which are possible, even in so dark a period. At the beginning of his paper on Cycles, Mr. Judge quotes from *The Wisdom of the Egyptians,* by Synesius, in which it is said that the destiny of mankind is watched over by a class of high intelligences called "the gods," who "descend according to orderly periods of time, for the purpose of imparting a beneficent impulse in the republics of mankind." The passage continues:

> But this happens when they harmonize a kingdom and send to this earth for that purpose souls who are allied to themselves. For this providence is divine and most ample, which frequently through one man pays attention to and affects countless multitudes of men.
>
> For there is indeed in the terrestrial abode the sacred tribe of heroes who pay attention to mankind, and who are able to give them assistance even in the smallest concerns. . . . This heroic tribe is, as it were, a colony from the gods established here in order that this terrene abode may not be left destitute of a better nature. But when matter excites her own proper blossoms to war against the soul, the resistance made by these heroic tribes is small when the gods are absent; for everything is strong only in its appropriate place and time. . . . But when the harmony adapted in the beginning by the gods to all terrene things becomes old, they descend again to earth that they may call the harmony forth, energize and resuscitate it when it is as it were expiring. . . .

> When, however, the whole order of mundane things, greatest and least, is corrupted, then it is necessary that the gods should descend for the purpose of imparting another orderly distribution of things.

From this old—and, as it may seem to us, quaint—account of the relation of the gods and heroes to the affairs of mankind, it is quite clear that cycles govern what the teachers are able to do in behalf of human improvement; and one can see, too, in consideration of the various recondite factors creating and affecting the opportunities for their efforts to be of value, that what they do must be left to their judgment alone—which is doubtless one of the reasons why we are informed of their efforts only in the most general terms. Yet also in this article are clear statements concerning the kind of cycle which began in 1875, it apparently being Mr. Judge's intention to set this idea off against the dark influence of Kali Yuga. Referring to the cycle spoken of by Synesius, under which souls allied to the gods come to earth as "heroes" to bring light and help to large numbers of men, Mr. Judge says that it may be called *The Cycle of Descending Celestial Influences,* adding that by "descending" he means "descending upon us." In confirmation of this idea he quotes the prophetic passage coming at the end of the first chapter of *Isis Unveiled,* which concludes:

> *An era of disenchantment and rebuilding will soon begin—nay, has already begun. The cycle has almost run its course; a new one is about to begin,* and the future pages of history may contain full proof that—
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> "If ancestry can be in aught believed,
> Descending spirits have conversed with man,
> And told him secrets of the world unknown."

Earlier, Mr. Judge had identified the "sacred tribe of heroes" in the terms of the Theosophical teaching:

> These "heroes" are none other than Nirmanakayas—Adepts of this or previous Manwantaras—who remain here in various states or conditions. Some are not using bodies at all, but keep spirituality alive among men in all parts of the world; and others are actually using bodies in the world. . . .
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> And among this "sacred tribe of heroes" must be classed other souls. They are those who, although now inhabiting bodies and moving among men, have passed through many occult initiations in previous lives, but are now condemned, as it were, to the penance of living in circumstances and in bodies that hem them in, as well as for a time make them forget the glor-

> ious past. But their influence is always felt, even if they themselves are not aware of it.

He adds that in addition to certain historical characters—a few of whom he names—who were certainly incarnated adepts, are "countless numbers of men and women now living who have passed through certain initiations during their past lives upon earth, and who produce effects in many directions quite unknown to themselves now."

Then, coinciding with this inner cycle are others, inner and outer —an outer one, for example, being the influence of Eastern thought and philosophy on Western civilization. This philosophical cycle, he says, has been going on in the East for many years, and the West has lately been affected by it through the spread of trade and the progress of science and transport. Speaking of these various influences, he says:

> Taking into account the spiritual cycles all so intimately connected with Karma and reincarnation, one would be compelled to conclude that this cycle will not be slow or weak. For, if we in Europe and America are the reincarnations of the ancients who formulated this philosophy, we must certainly be powerfully affected upon having it presented to our notice in this life. And as the very air is getting filled with theosophical ideas, and children are growing up every day, the conclusion is irresistible that as the new generation grows up it will be more familiar with theosophical terms and propositions than we were in our youth. For in every direction now, children are likely to hear Karma, Reincarnation, Buddhism, Theosophy, and all these ideas mentioned or discussed. . . .
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> To my mind the mere fact that we were organized with a definite platform in that year [1875] is strong evidence that the "heroic tribe of heroes" had a hand in our formation. Let us, then, not resist the cycle, nor, complaining of the task, sit down to rest. There is no time for rest. The weak, the despairing, and the doubting may have to wait, but men and women of action cannot stand still in the face of such an opportunity.
>
> Arise, then, O Atlanteans, and repair the mischief done so long ago!

Well, how does Mr. Judge's "explanation" help us in the present? It helps a great deal by putting the formidable forces now playing themselves out on the stage of current events into the perspective of a larger history, and by adding a light on the cause of the dark tendencies which are now in process of exhausting themselves. The ripple of effects must run its course, but other tendencies are in pro-

cess of making themselves felt; and if we could see through the eyes of the Teachers we might recognize more clearly the signs of the inner cycle of awakening which is now gathering strength.

Explanations of this sort cannot obliterate the ugliness of much that men do today, nor erase in a day or a year the ignorance which gives desperation and fear so strong a purchase on the lives of so many. This sort of "miracle" cannot be, nor would we, upon reflection, seek it, since as intelligent and moral human beings, we expect to pay our debts. Yet strength and hope are born from vision, and knowledge of cyclic change brings the encouragement we need to work on into the future.

HUMAN PERFECTION

Hitherto, it was remarked in almost every historical age that a wide interval, almost a chasm, lay between practical and ideal perfection. Yet, as from time to time certain great characters appeared on earth who taught mankind to look beyond the veil of illusion, man learnt that the gulf was not an impassable one; that it is the province of mankind through its higher and more spiritual races to fill the great gap more and more with every coming cycle; for every man, as a unit, has it in his power to add his mite toward filling it. Yes; there are still men, who, notwithstanding the present chaotic condition of the moral world, and the sorry *débris* of the best human ideals, still persist in believing and teaching that the now *ideal* human perfection is no dream, but a law of divine nature; and that, had Mankind to wait even millions of years, still it must some day reach it and rebecome *a race of gods*.

Meanwhile, the periodical rise and fall of human character on the external planes takes place now, as it did before, and the ordinary average perception of man is too weak to see that both processes occur each time on a higher plane than the preceding.

But as such changes are not always the work of centuries, for often extreme changes are wrought by swift acting forces—*e.g.* by wars, speculations, epidemics, the devastation of famines or religious fanaticism—therefore, do the blind masses imagine that man was, is, and will be the same. To the eyes of us, moles, mankind is like our globe—seemingly stationary. And yet, both move in space and time with an equal velocity, around themselves and—*onward*.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

UNIVERSAL PROCESSES

THE Secret Doctrine teaches the progressive development of everything, worlds as well as atoms; and this stupendous development has neither conceivable beginning nor imaginable end. Our "Universe" is only one of an infinite number of Universes, all of them "Sons of Necessity," because links in the great Cosmic chain of Universes, each one standing in the relation of an effect as regards is predecessor, and being a cause as regards its successor.

The appearance and disappearance of the Universe are pictured as an outbreathing and inbreathing of "the Great Breath," which is eternal, and which, being Motion, is one of the three aspects of the Absolute—Abstract Space and Duration being the other two. When the "Great Breath" is projected, it is called the Divine Breath, and is regarded as the breathing of the Unknowable Deity—the One Existence—which breathes out a thought, as it were, which becomes the Kosmos. So also is it when the Divine Breath is inspired again the Universe disappears into the bosom of "the Great Mother," who then sleeps "wrapped in her invisible robes."

It is idle to speak of "laws arising when Deity prepares to create" for (*a*) laws or rather LAW is eternal and uncreated; and (*b*) that Deity is Law, and *vice versa*. There is an inherent law—not only in the primordial, but also in the manifested matter of our phenomenal plane—by which Nature correlates her geometrical forms, and later, also, her compound elements; and in which there is no place for accident or chance. It is a fundamental law in Occultism, that there is no rest or cessation of motion in Nature. That which seems rest is only the change of one form into another; the change of substance going hand in hand with that of form—as we are taught in Occult physics, which thus seem to have anticipated the discovery of the "Conservation of matter" by a considerable time.

It is the ONE LIFE, eternal, invisible, yet Omnipresent, without beginning or end, yet periodical in its regular manifestations, between which periods reigns the dark mystery of non-Being; unconscious, yet absolute Consciousness; unrealisable, yet the one self-existing reality; truly, "a chaos to the sense, a Kosmos to the reason." Its

NOTE.—A student's collation from standard Theosophical sources.

one absolute attribute, which is ITSELF, eternal, ceaseless Motion, is called in esoteric parlance the "Great Breath," which is the perpetual motion of the universe, in the sense of limitless, ever-present SPACE. That which is motionless cannot be Divine. But then there is nothing in fact and reality absolutely motionless within the universal soul.

The "Breath" of the One Existence is used in its application only to the spiritual aspect of Cosmogony by Archaic esotericism; otherwise, it is replaced by its equivalent in the material plane—Motion. The One Eternal Element, or element-containing Vehicle, is *Space,* dimensionless in every sense; co-existent with which are—endless *duration,* primordial (hence indestructible) *matter,* and *motion*—absolute "perpetual motion" which is the "breath" of the "One" Element. This breath, as seen, can never cease, not even during the Pralayic eternities.

MOTION is eternal *per se,* and in the manifested Kosmos it is the Alpha and Omega of that which is called electricity, galvanism, magnetism, sensation—moral and physical—thought, and even life, on this plane. Thus fire, on our plane, is simply the manifestation of motion, or life.

But the "Breath of the One Existence" does not, all the same, apply to the *One Causeless Cause* or the "All Be-ness" (in contradistinction to All-Being, which is Brahmâ, or the Universe.) . . . The eternal and changeless Law causes the great periods of Activity and Rest, called so graphically, and at the same time so poetically, the "Days and Nights of Brahmâ." The expansion "from within without" of the Mother, called elsewhere the "Waters of Space". . . .

From the beginning of man's inheritance, from the first appearance of the architects of the globe he lives in, the unrevealed Deity was recognised and considered under its only philosophical aspect—universal motion, the thrill of the creative Breath in Nature. Occultism sums up the "One Existence" thus: "Deity is an arcane, living (or moving) Fire, and the eternal witnesses to this unseen Presence are Light, Heat, Moisture,"—this trinity including, and being the cause of, every phenomenon in Nature. Intra-Cosmic motion is eternal and ceaseless; cosmic motion (the visible, or that which is subject to perception) is finite and periodical.

"Motion is eternal in the unmanifested, and periodical in the manifest," says an Occult teaching. It is "when heat caused by the descent of FLAME into primordial matter causes its particles to move,

which motion becomes Whirlwind." A drop of liquid assumes a spheroidal form owing to its atoms moving around themselves in their ultimate, unresolvable, and noumenal essence; unresolvable for physical science, at any rate.

One of the objects of *The Secret Doctrine* is to prove that planetary movements cannot be satisfactorily accounted for by the theory of gravitation alone. Besides the force acting *in* matter there is also a force acting *on* matter.

When we speak of the modified conditions of Spirit-Matter (which is in reality Force), and call them by various names such as heat, cold, light and darkness, attraction and repulsion, electricity and magnetism, etc., etc., to the occultist they are simple names, expressions of difference in manifestations of one and the same Force (always dual in differentiation), but not any specific difference of forces. For all such differences in the objective world result only from the peculiarities of differentiation of matter on which the one free force acts, helped in this by that portion of its essence which we call imprisoned force, or material molecules. The worker within, the inherent force, ever tends to unite with its parent essence without; and thus, the Mother acting within, causes the Web to contract; and the Father acting without, to expand. Science calls this gravitation; Occultists, the work of the universal Life-Force, which radiates from that Absolute and Unknowable FORCE which is outside of all Space and Time. This is the work of Eternal evolution and involution, or expansion and contraction.

We consider it as the *Ultimate Law* of the Universe, the source, origin and fount of all other laws which exist throughout Nature. Karma is the unerring law which adjusts effect to cause, on the physical, mental and spiritual planes of being. As no cause remains without its due effect from greatest to least, from a cosmic disturbance down to the movement of your hand, and as like produces like, *Karma* is that unseen and unknown law *which adjusts wisely, intelligently and equitably* each effect to its cause, tracing the latter back to its producer. Though itself *unknowable,* its action is perceivable.

Karma neither punishes nor rewards, it is simply *the one* Universal Law which guides unerringly, and, so to say, blindly, all other laws productive of certain effects along the grooves of their respective causations. When Buddhism teaches that "Karma is that moral kernel (of any being) which alone survives death and continues in transmigration" or reincarnation, it simply means that there re-

mains nought after each Personality but the causes produced by it; causes which are undying, *i.e.,* which cannot be eliminated from the Universe until replaced by their legitimate effects, and wiped out by them, so to speak, and such causes—unless compensated during the life of the person who produced them with adequate effects, will follow the reincarnated Ego, and reach it in its subsequent reincarnation until a harmony between effects and causes is fully re-established. No "personality"—a mere bundle of material atoms and of instinctual and mental characteristics—can of course continue, as such, in the world of pure Spirit. Only that which is immortal in its very nature and divine in its essence, namely, the Ego, can exist for ever.

REALITY OF MORAL VALUES

A view of history which recognizes that historical events have meaning cannot ignore the question of values—their preservation and possible actualization in the drama of occurrences. It has already been pointed out that for Radhakrishnan, Being is in some way characterized by value. *Sat,* that which is, is also *satyam,* that which is true. Unless the values cherished by men have grounding in the very structure of reality and unless their actualization in the context of human events is somehow guaranteed, history would make little sense. The traditionally accepted triplet of ultimate values—Truth, Goodness, and Beauty have their foundation in God Himself. For Radhakrishnan moral values in history are not just "empirical accidents," but are grounded in reality, "which is the source of the significance of what happens" in the temporal process of history. Men cannot strive for ideals with courage and conviction unless assured that those ideals are not just accidental fancies but eternal verities which give meaning to life.

—S. J. SAMARTHA

PSYCHICAL DEVELOPMENT

SOMEWHERE it is said that the loves and hates of ordinary men are the powers of beneficence and compassion in Masters. In thinking this over it would be well to keep in mind the three distinctions of physical, psychical, and spiritual, remembering that only the last includes the other two. The first step in true mysticism and true occultism, then, is to try to apprehend the meaning of Universal Brotherhood, for without brotherhood even the highest progress in the practice of "magic" must turn to ashes in the mouth.

It follows that what is called "practical occultism" is only incidental to the journey along the path. Astral body formation, clairvoyance, looking into the astral light, and controlling elementals are all possible, but not all profitable. The electric current may be brought into existence by any ignoramus who has the key to the engine room and knows how to start the dynamo, but is unable to prevent his fellow man or himself from being instantly killed, should the current accidentally be diverted through his body.

"Psychic" means, in Theosophical teaching, all that portion of the Mind in nature and man which lies between the purely spiritual and the purely physical. It is the *plastic* state or aspect of universal and individual *life*. The *psychic* is the active agency of all progress as of all retrogression. The "psychic nature" is a term to indicate the human mind, the *joint* product of the ascent of matter and the descent of spirit, necessarily and forever in unstable equilibrium. The human mind or the "human nature" is neither divine nor elemental, but a compound of the activities of both poles of evolution, the spiritual and the physical. Being a compound, it is necessarily unstable and perishable as an entity and must in the end be reabsorbed in one or the other, by either "the Self of Matter" or "the Self of Spirit."

Psyche means the terrestrial Soul, the lower *Manas*. The term "Psychism," from the Greek *psyche*, is now used to denote very loosely every kind of mental phenomena, *e.g.*, mediumship, hypnotic receptivity, but also inspired prophecy, simple clairvoyance in the astral light, and real seership. In short, the word covers every

phase and manifestation of the powers and potencies of the human and the divine Souls. To attempt to acquire the use of psychic powers for mere curiosity or for selfish ends is dangerous for the same reasons as in the case of mediumship. As the civilization of the present day is selfish to the last degree and built on the personal element, the rules for the development of these powers in the right way have not been given out. The Teachers have said that philosophy and ethics must first be learned and practiced before any development of powers is to be sought; and their condemnation of the wholesale development of mediums is supported by the history of spiritualism, which is one long story of the ruin of mediums.

The psychic nature is our feeling nature, the nature that responds to joy and pain, to the noble and the ignoble. If we use the psychic faculties normally, learning to interpret their responses, we may become able by the force of awakened spiritual nature to exchange responses to the low, the mean, the selfish, for responses to the noble, the high, the selfless. In truth the psychic nature is the raw material we have to work with—the part of us that needs training and regulation. The body of itself is inert and irresponsible; the psychic nature carries the body to degradation or makes of it a worthy shrine of Spirit.

During the long ages that have passed since the present solar system began, the Soul has constructed for its own use various sheaths, ranging from very fine ones, near to its own essential being, to those of coarser stuff, ending with the outer physical body, the most illusionary of all, although appearing to be the real. All these sheaths are necessary if the Soul is to know or to act.

Each man has a duty to the atoms he uses. He is their educator. Being always in possession of some, to form his vehicles, and likewise ever throwing them off, he should so live that they gain a fresh impulse to the higher life of man as compared with the brute. This impress given by us confers an affinity either for human bodies and brains, or for that which, corresponding to animal lives and passions, gravitates to the lower kingdoms. The forward impulse in evolution ever works to turn inflexible into adaptable forms, limited intelligence into greater intelligence, consciousness into self-consciousness, and these are responsibilities of man. In her great movements Nature seems to cause destruction, but that is for the purpose of release and reconstruction. The rocks are dissolved into earth, elements combine to bring on change, but there is ever the

onward march of progress in evolution. Nature is eternally re-creating. Man is capable of the same.

There are two kinds of psychic powers. One group embraces the lower, psychic and mental energies; the other is one which requires the highest training of spiritual powers. Says Krishna in *The Bhagavad-Gita:* "He who is engaged in the performance of Yoga, who has subdued his senses and who has concentrated his mind in me (Krishna), such Yogis all the Siddhis stand ready to serve."

The so-called Seer who "enjoys" spectacles without self-knowledge is as a boy who idly swims in the lagoon. So may be the one who swims and cuts capers in the astral light; he becomes lost in strange regions which surpass his comprehension. It must be remembered that each person has pursued in prior lives one or another course of action, has trained and developed this or that soul-sheath. And although at death his outer forms may be dissolved as integral collections, the effect of the development formerly pursued is not lost to the reincarnating being. It is preserved through the mysterious laws that guide the atoms when they assemble for the birth of a new personal house to be occupied by the returning Soul. If the astral senses have received exclusive attention in the prior existence on earth, then there will be born a medium. But a right use of perceptive powers may bring forth a sage or a seer. Which it will be depends upon the great balancing of forces from the prior life. For instance, one who in another incarnation attended wholly to psychic development without philosophy, or made other errors, may be born with sight but little self-restraint; another, again, of the same class, may emerge as a wholly untrustworthy and only partial clairvoyant.

Nature has her laws and her "policemen," and if we commit felonies in the Astral world the great Law and the guardians of it, for which no bribery is possible, will execute the penalty. The kingdom of heaven is not given away, it must be taken by strong search. It lies before us to be entered upon and occupied, but that can be only after a battle which, when won, entitles the victor to remain in undisturbed possession. "There are the powers of all Nature before you; take what you can."

THE PATH OF ACTION

THE Mohammedan teacher directs his disciples to tread carefully the razor's edge between the good and the bad; only a hair line divides the false from the true. In this the Asiatic took an excellent illustration, for the "hair line" is the small stroke *alif,* which, placed in a word, may alter the sense from the true to the false.

In chapter four of *The Bhagavad-Gita,* entitled, "Jnana-Yog," or the book of the Religion of Knowledge, the blessed Krishna instructs Arjuna upon the nature of action, saying: "Renunciation of and devotion through works, are both means of final emancipation; but of these two, devotion through works is more highly esteemed (by Him) than the renunciation of them"; and, "the nature of action, of forbidden action, and of inaction must be well learned. The Path of Action is obscure and difficult to discern."

In ordinary humdrum life these words of Krishna are true enough, but their force is strangely felt in the mind of the devoted student of Theosophy, and especially if he happens to be a member of the Theosophical Society.

That body of investigators has now passed its probationary period, so that, as a whole, it is an accepted chela of the Blessed Masters who gave the impulse that brought it into being. Every member of it, therefore, stands to the whole Society as every fibre in the body of any single chela does to the whole man. Thus now, more than ever before, does each member of the Society feel disturbing influences; and the Path of Action becomes more and more likely to be obscured.

Always existing or coming into existence in our ranks, have been centers of emotional disturbance. Those who expect that these perturbations ought now to cease and grow less likely to recur, will find themselves mistaken. The increase of interest that is being taken in the Society's work, and the larger number of earnest students who are with us than at any previous period, constitute elements of agitation. Each new member is another nature added, and every one acts after his own nature. Thus the chances for being discomposed are

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NOTE.—This article was first published by Mr. Judge in the *Path* for November, 1887, and was last reprinted in THEOSOPHY 40:165.

sure to increase; and it is better thus, for peace with stagnation partakes of the nature of what is called in *The Bhagavad-Gita, Tamagunam*, or, of the quality of darkness. This quality of darkness, than which there is nothing worse, is the chief component of indifference, and indifference leads only to extinction.

Still another element in this equation that every earnest Theosophist has to solve, and which in itself contains the potency of manifold commotions, is a law, hard to define, yet inexorable in its action. For its clearer comprehension we may say that it is shown in nature by the rising of the sun. In the night when the moon's rays flooded the scene, every object was covered with a romantic light, and when that luminary went down, it left everything in a partial obscurity wherein many doubtful characters could conceal their identity or even masquerade for that which they were not. But on the sun's arising all objects stand out in their true colors: the rugged bark of the oak has lost the softening cover of partial day; the rank weeds can no longer be imagined as the malwa flowers. The powerful hand of the God of day has unveiled the character of all.

It must not be supposed that a record has been kept by any officials, from which are to be taken and published the characters of our members. There is no need of that; circumstances taking place in natural order, or apparently from eccentric motion, will cause us all, whether we will or not, to stand forth for what we are.

Every one of us will have to stop and learn in the cave outside of the Hall of Learning before we can enter there. Very true that cave, with all its dark shadows and agitating influences, is an illusion, but it is one that very few fail to create, for hard indeed to be overcome are the illusions of matter. In that shall we discover the nature of action and inaction; there we will come to admit that although the quality of action partakes of the nature of badness, yet it is nearer to the quality of truth than is that which we have called darkness, quietude, indifference. Out of the turmoil and the strife of an apparently untamed life may arise one who is a warrior for Truth. A thousand errors of judgment made by an earnest student, who, with a pure and high motive, strives to push on the Cause, are better than the outward goodness of those who are judges of their fellows. All these errors made in a good cause, while sowing good seed, will be atoned by the motive.

We must not then be judges of any man. We cannot assume to say who shall or shall not be allowed to enter and to work in the

Theosophical Society. The Masters who founded it wish us to offer its influence and its light to all, regardless of what we may ourselves think; we are to sow the seed, and when it falls on stony ground no blame attaches to the sower.

Nor is our Society for good and respectable people only. Now, as much as when Jesus of Nazareth spoke, is it true that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repenteth, than over ninety-nine just men who need no repentance.

Remembering then that the Path of Action is obscure and difficult to be discerned, let us beware of the illusions of matter.

—HADJI ERINN

THE MASKS OF PERSONALITY

Each year places a new mask upon thy face. This one, happy; that one, indifferent; another, sad; the next one, perhaps grinning and ridiculous. Each year puts a new mask upon thy face, and it goes away. . . .

But thine unaffected *I*, whose physiognomy only the gods know, knows that *it* is not the mask: that it neither smiles, nor weeps, nor makes grimaces.

Thine *I*, on seeing itself in the mirror, through the windows, each time less luminous, of the eyes, says to itself, "Behold the new veil which life has put upon me." . . . And goes on thinking about something else.

Many of the masks have remained for a long time in photographs. They will last longer than they deserve to endure. But none of them has been at any time the exact expression of thine *I*.

May this teach thee to seek in men the interior physiognomy, the hidden physiognomy. Sometime thou wilt be able to say, "Here there was an angel and I knew it not."

—AMADO NERVO

letters • questions • comment

Why do people feel so strongly about being "right" concerning ultimate questions?

The security that a man feels in respect to his basic convictions or beliefs is usually dependent upon the degree to which he has put them into practice. Application also has the natural effect of subjecting ideas to correction. "Wholeness" in life might be regarded as having a philosophic sense of fitness concerning what happens—as the *Gita* says, the man confirmed in spiritual knowledge is not disturbed by anything that may come to pass. The question, then, does not turn so much on "logical" problems as on an inward integrity which can hardly be defined, although it is very real.

The inadequacy of a man's conviction or belief may emerge in the form of a slow realization. This is the sort of awakening which counts for something, not the embarrassment which may arise when someone is backed into a corner during an ordeal of disputation. People who practice what they preach have a natural realization of the prior importance of such an awakening.

However, the question seems to involve metaphysical analysis of philosophic first principles, and the question is open to some discussion in these terms. Here *The Secret Doctrine* is of considerable help.

First of all, "basic assumptions" are equivalent to "first principles," and first principles are something one cannot get behind. If a person has not thought about first principles, or recognized the need for them, he may be embarrassed by the discovery, involuntarily arrived at in discussion, that first principles cannot be defined except in terms of themselves—which, as a matter of fact, is neither explanation nor definition. True first principles are not derived or even really defined; they are postulated. They can be judged by their intuitive appeal and by their consequences in thought and action. It is by such means that students of Theosophy come to adopt the Fundamental Propositions of the Secret Doctrine. The entire work of that name is devoted to elucidating and examining the consequences of these first principles. Minds habituated to expecting everything that can be talked about to be subject to definition are

often upset by encountering realities which are necessary as postulates in thought, but not subject to definition.

For example, Madame Blavatsky distinguishes between the Causeless Cause and the First Cause. The Causeless Cause is a necessary postulate, since the *first* cause, as it belongs to a series and has a number, is something that had a beginning, was itself "caused," and therefore is not the ultimate source of causation. But the idea of a Causeless Cause prevents any attempt to go behind the reality of which this expression is a symbol or representation. We easily see the necessity of this postulate when we think about it. So with all causal chains. They all go back to the Causeless Cause. One discussion of ultimate causation in *The Secret Doctrine* is as follows (I, 44-45):

> "The Causes of Existence" mean not only the physical causes known to science, but the metaphysical causes, the chief of which is the desire to exist, an outcome of Nidana and Maya. This desire for a sentient life shows itself in everything, from an atom to a sun, and is a reflection of the Divine Thought propelled into objective existence, into a law that the Universe should exist. According to esoteric teaching, the real cause of that supposed desire, and of all existence, remains for ever hidden, and its first emanations are the most complete abstractions mind can conceive. These abstractions must of necessity be postulated as the cause of the material Universe which presents itself to the senses and intellect; and they underlie the secondary and subordinate powers of Nature, which, anthropomorphized, have been worshipped as God and gods by the common herd of every age. It is impossible to conceive anything without a cause; the attempt to do so makes the mind a blank. This is virtually the condition to which the mind must come at last when we try to trace back the chain of causes and effects, but both science and religion jump to this condition of blankness much more quickly than is necessary; for they ignore the metaphysical abstractions which are the only conceivable cause of physical concretions. These abstractions become more and more concrete as they approach our plane of existence, until finally they phenomenalise in the form of the material Universe, by a process of conversion of metaphysics into physics, analogous to that by which steam can be condensed into water, and the water frozen into ice.

Here we have a foundation for thinking about first principles in relation to cosmology. The truly *first* principles are those which we can barely conceptualize, and certainly cannot get beyond. Reflection on the processes of thought which lead to authentic first principles is a philosophical activity; its result is metaphysics. *The Secret*

Doctrine may be taken as a model of this sort of thinking. Whatever conceptions we arrive at will constitute our first principles, although a thoughtful individual will be wholly cognizant of the possibility of improving his understanding, almost without limit. The student of philosophy will in this sense always acknowledge that his grasp of first principles can be improved, and will feel no embarrassment if he can learn from others toward this end.

There could hardly be anything wrong with feeling strongly about the search for truth, and if being "right" is seen to be a relative matter, then no anxiety need be felt on this score.

The Discovery of Self

Our search for knowledge is almost universally a looking for something outside. We are looking for information, for instruction, in the thoughts of other men, in the ideas of other peoples, which, in this school of Occult Knowledge, is not knowledge at all. The only *knowledge* we can have is that which we gain for ourselves, and within ourselves, as actual experience. External facts and information can never give us any understanding whatever of the higher, more divine parts of our nature.

There is no understanding, no explanation, of the mysteries of our own existence, on the basis of a single life. We have to go beyond that, back of that, to realize what evolution means. Evolution means an unfolding from within outwards. That is the way all beings grow —physically, intellectually, spiritually. The beings below us are unfolding; they are embryonic souls not yet arrived at the human stage of self-consciousness and self-realization, but they are on their way to where we already are. The same thing is true of all the beings above us. They have already passed through stages similar to ours. The inner part—the Enduring in every being—is illimitable, infinite, in its power of unfolding and expression, because it is the Immortal.

—Robert Crosbie

OCCULTISM: WHAT IS IT?

NOT only in the Theosophical Society, but out of it, are tyros in Occultism. They are dabblers in a fine art, a mighty science, an almost impenetrable mystery. The motives that bring them to the study are as various as the number of individuals engaged in it, and as hidden from even themselves as is the center of the earth from the eye of science. Yet the *motive* is more important than any other factor.

These dilettanti in this science have always been abroad. No age or country has been without them, and they have left after them many books—of no particular value. Those of today are making them now, for the irresistible impulse of vanity drives them to collate the more or less unsound hypotheses of their predecessors, which, seasoned with a proper dash of mystery, are put forth to the crowd of those who would fain acquire wisdom at the cost-price of a book. Meanwhile the world of real occultists smiles silently, and goes on with the laborious process of sifting out the living germs from the masses of men. For occultists must be found and fostered and prepared for coming ages when power will be needed and pretension will go for nothing.

But the persons now writing about occultism and competent to do any more than repeat unproved formulæ and assertions left over from mediæval days, are few in number. It is very easy to construct a book full of so-called occultism taken from French or German books, and then to every now and then stop the reader short by telling him that it is not wise to reveal any more. The writings of Christian in France give much detail about initiations into occultism, but he honestly goes no further than to tell what he has gained from Greek and Latin fragments. Others, however, have followed him, repeated his words without credit, and as usual halted at the explanation.

There are, again, others who, while asserting that there is magic science called occultism, merely advise the student to cultivate purity and spiritual aspirations, leaving it to be assumed that powers

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NOTE.—This article by Mr. Judge was first published in the *Path*, May, 1890, and was last reprinted in THEOSOPHY 50:448.

and knowledge will follow. Between these two, Theosophists of the self-seeking or the unselfish type are completely puzzled. Those who are selfish may learn by bitter disappointment and sad experience; but the unselfish and the earnest need encouragement on the one hand and warning on the other. As an Adept wrote years ago to London Theosophists: "He who does not feel equal to the work need not undertake a task too heavy for him." This is applicable to all, for every one should be informed of the nature and heaviness of the task. Speaking of this tremendous thing—Occultism—Krishna in *The Bhagavad-Gita* says: "During a considerable period of time this doctrine has been lost in the world. . . . This mystery is very important." We do not think that the doctrine has yet been restored to the world, albeit that it is in the keeping of living men—the Adepts. And in warning those who strive after occultism with a selfish motive he declares: "Confused by many worldly thoughts, surrounded by the meshes of bewilderment, devoted to the enjoyment of their desires, they descend to foul Naraka . . . and hence they proceed to the lowest plane of being."

In what, then, does the heaviness of the Occultist's task consist? In the immensity of its sweep as well as the infinitude of its detail. Mere sweet and delightful longing after God will not of itself accomplish it, nor is progress found in *aspiring* to self-knowledge, even when as a result of that is found partial illumination. These are excellent; but we are talking of a problem whose implacable front yields to nothing but *force,* and that force must be directed by *knowledge.*

The field is not emotional, for the play of the emotions destroys the equilibrium essential to the art. Work done calling for reward avails not unless it has produced knowledge.

A few examples will show that in Occult Science there is a vastness and also a multiplicity of division not suspected by theosophical Occultists in embryo.

The element of which fire is a visible effect is full of centres of force. Each one is ruled by its own law. The aggregate of centres and the laws governing them which produce certain physical results are classed by science as laws in physics, and are absolutely ignored by the book-making Occultist because he has no knowledge of them. No dreamer or even a philanthropist will ever as such know those laws. And so on with all the other elements.

The Masters of Occultism state that a law of "transmutation among forces" prevails forever. It will baffle any one who has not

the power to calculate the value of even the smallest tremble of a vibration, not only in itself but instantly upon its collision with another, whether that other be similar to it or different. Modern science admits the existence of this law as the correlation of forces. It is felt in the moral sphere of our being as well as in the physical world, and causes remarkable changes in a man's character and circumstances quite beyond us at present and altogether unknown to science and metaphysics.

It is said that each person has a distinct mathematical value expressed by one number. This is a compound or resultant of numberless smaller values. When it is known, extraordinary effects may be produced not only in the mind of the person but also in his feelings, and this number may be discovered by certain calculations more recondite than those of our higher mathematics. By its use the person may be made angry without cause, and even insane or full of happiness, just as the operator desires.

There is a world of beings known to the Indians as that of the Devas, whose inhabitants can produce illusions of a character the description of which would throw our wildest romances into the shade. They may last five minutes and seem as a thousand years, or they may extend over ten thousand actual years.

Into this world the purest theosophist, the most spiritual man or woman, may go without consent, unless the knowledge and power are possessed which prevent it.

On the threshold of all these laws and states of being linger forces and beings of an awful and determined character. No one can avoid them, as they are on the road that leads to knowledge, and they are every now and then awakened or perceived by those who, while completely ignorant on these subjects, still persist in dabbling with charms and necromantic practices.

It is wiser for theosophists to study the doctrine of brotherhood and its application, to purify their motives and actions, so that after patient work for many lives, if necessary, in the great cause of humanity, they may at last reach that point where all knowledge and all power will be theirs by right.

—EUSEBIO URBAN

on the lookout

Goodbye to "Innocence"

In *Psychology Today* for last December, Rollo May, the humanistic psychologist, uses the tragedy at Kent State University a few years ago to illustrate the failure of Americans to grow up to full individual responsibility. He finds both the Kent demonstrators and the guardsmen who fired on them convinced of a "righteousness" they had not earned, acting out behavior they had not sufficiently examined, in a situation they had not tried to understand. And this kind of thoughtless involvement in the terrible moral complexities of the present, he says, affects practically everyone today. He writes:

> Look at Kent State. Who was innocent, who was guilty there? Two of the four students killed that day had nothing at all to do with the radical movement or with taunting the National Guard. This suggests a moral: *there are no bystanders anymore.* We are all part of the tragic event, we are all involved. Without a radical surrender of consciousness, no one today can draw his moral skirts around him and claim immunity from such tragic situations. "To breathe is to judge," Camus reminds us.

Collective Karma

Dr. May is suggesting that the American people have been overtaken by "history," in Arnold Toynbee's sense. In a wry definition of his own, Toynbee said, "History is something that happens to other people." By this he means that so long as life flows along pleasantly, one does not think much about history except as something that happened in the past, or to others. Only when oppressive events are brought home to us do we begin to understand what is meant by the impact of history. Theosophically speaking, one could say that collective or national Karma is beginning to make itself felt. The returning influence of common actions and common attitudes is becoming manifest in the clash of social forces which act destructively without apparent cause or justification. So, as Dr. May has put it, the days of our innocence are over.

In another passage he elaborates:

> In a letter to me, the college-age sister of an Ohio guardsman speculates about what might have happened if her brother had

been at Kent State. "If my brother had been called for riot duty, and if some irresponsible officer had provided him with a loaded gun, and if the confrontation had become strained, he may have shot a student." But then she exonerates him and the guardsmen who actually were there that day. "I think that Allison Kraus [a girl who was killed] and the guardsman who shot her were playing roles that didn't belong to either of them." She goes on to say where she thinks the culprit can be found: "I think the country has evolved into a kind of massive unreality and fear. . . . It is a kind of out-of-touchness which robs people of most of their alternatives except survival."

Why People Are "Powerless"

Without adding comment, Dr. May continues with consideration of Camus:

> In our day we tend to live out the state of mind Camus predicted in his novel *The Stranger*. Meursault exists in a zombie state of half-lighted consciousness. He makes love to a girl as though both are half asleep, and he finally shoots an Arab in the sun on the beach in a condition of semiawareness that leaves us, as no doubt it left him, wondering whether he really shot the Arab or not.
>
> He is tried for murdering the Arab, but his real crime is the murder of himself. What my correspondent calls this "massive unreality" and "out-of-touchness" makes every man a stranger to other men as well as to himself.
>
> Can we blame Kent State on society? You and I are society. Society has power because we as individuals capitulate to it. We give over our power, and then are frustrated because we are powerless.

Guidance from Myth

Yet although seeming powerless to ourselves, we remain responsible for what we do, for the reason that we are powerless by a kind of choice. Dr. May uses the myth of Oedipus to point to the necessity of finding ourselves responsible:

> Oedipus pursues his identity with decisiveness and rage, but he never gives up: *I must know who I am and where I am from.* He forces himself to see it all, and then in an act which dramatizes the persistent internal conflict over the will to see, cuts out his eyes, the symbol of consciousness. Withdrawing to Colonus, Oedipus ponders the problems of guilt and responsibility by looking *inside* himself. . . . Put simply, the Oedipus myth suggests an ethic of intention, based on the assumption that each person is responsible for the effects of his own actions. The battalion

in wartime, the *mores* of society in peacetime no longer absolve us.

Knowledge Needed

The psychologist's insight suggests the profound importance of motive, and of accepting responsibility through a deep sense of the meaning of being human. This view fits perfectly with the teachings of Karma and reincarnation, and we may be heartened that a writer as influential as Dr. May has resolved to develop such a theme as most important in this hour of history. The preparations for the coming cycle will involve changes of attitude and mood at every level of the intellectual and moral continuum of the mind of the times, and Dr. May's kind of "humanistic psychology," with its primary emphasis on individual moral responsibility, is surely essential to the changes that are to come. He also says:

> The future lies with the person who can live as an individual within the solidarity of the human race. Until now, we have been taught to do one or the other. We have learned to accept responsibility for the *sincerity* of our actions, but sincerity is not enough. We accept responsibility for our *convictions,* but neither is this enough. Conviction and sincerity as values are part of the individualistic ethic that has its roots in the Renaissance. A person can be entirely sincere and firm in his convictions—and entirely wrong. We have responsibility for whether we *are* right or wrong; and the fact that this often cannot be clearly known expresses itself in empathetic humility rather than in self-righteous Pharisaism.

The Larger Responsibility

Dr. May evidently believes that the problem of evil is to be resolved only by developing a basis for ethics which accepts both good and evil as relative values, united by the degree of one's willingness to accept the responsibility for one's motivations. Furthermore, what we *react* to, "out there," he says, must be recognized, as at least partly the projection of ourselves. The process of acquiring this knowledge of ourselves necessitates the surrender of innocence as a retreat. He says in conclusion:

> We need not—we should not—surrender our concern for personal integrity, or diminish the value of the individual. What we should do is balance our traditional concerns against a willingly assumed responsibility for our fellow men and women. To make this balance work we have to stop pleading innocent, become aware of the violence within us, and recognize that we achieve good, not apart from evil, but in spite of it.

Beyond Good and Evil

The view of good and evil as contrasts afforded by our present condition in nature, from which we, as spiritual beings, must create a knowledge of practical ethics, seems to derive its validity only from the postulate of a continuing spiritual identity that is itself defined by neither good nor evil. Dr. May is suggesting that, if we are to understand each other and the violence of our times, we must face our whole nature. But there seems to be no effective way to do this without the help of a philosophy which clarifies the intuitions made possible by assimilated experience. In her article "The Origin of Evil," H. P. Blavatsky indicates how the mind can begin to understand the meaning of evil in human life. She says:

> Buddha left us an example of fortitude to follow; in living, not in running away from life. His doctrine shows evil immanent, *not in matter,* which is eternal, but in the illusions created by it: through the changes and transformations of matter generating life—because these changes are conditioned and such life is ephemeral. At the same time those evils are shown to be not only unavoidable, but necessary. For if we would discern good from evil, light from darkness, and appreciate the former, we can do so only through the contrasts between the two.

The Rain-Makers

Responsive to the growing awareness that no occurrence in nature takes place in isolation, an article, "Putting In the Weather Fix," by Jack Freed (*Nation,* Nov. 20, 1972), describes efforts of a group called the Tri-State Natural Weather Association in calling attention to the implications of private and government-sponsored cloud-seeding operations.

Mr. Freed notes that a rain-making project under the auspices of the Pentagon in 1969 succeeded in relieving a drought in the Philippines, and remarks that if the military can make it rain in a drought-stricken area, it is not unreasonable to expect that it would be tempted to flood the besieged valleys of Vietnam. But he touches upon even broader concerns when he suggests that our ignorance of the consequences of meteorological tampering may prove to be disastrous on a global scale:

> Scientists writing in such publications as the *Journal of Applied Meteorology* and *Science Magazine,* have for the past decade expressed severe doubts as to the predictability of cloud seeding. Generally, small amounts of chemical seeding are believed to trigger rainfall, and larger amounts to inhibit it, but the atmos-

phere is not a neat laboratory where all factors can be isolated. Maybe a rainstorm was caused by seeding; perhaps it would have rained anyway.

George H. T. Kimble, geographer and meteorologist, says flatly that the effects of weather modification are worldwide and "quite unpredictable." The destruction of hurricanes, he says, means the destruction of rains; destruction of lightning reduces the supply of necessary nitrogen (lightning spreads more than 100 million tons of nitrogen annually over the earth) and seeding can produce effects opposite to those desired.

Mr. Freed thinks serious consideration of several questions is long overdue:

The Tri-State Natural Weather Association asks: what are the wide-range effects of weather modification, and will permanent weather changes result? If you make it rain in one place, the association contends, you may cause a drought somewhere else. In testimony given at Senate hearings in 1966, some meteorological experts claimed that rain cannot really be increased; it can be triggered to fall sooner and perhaps heavier than it would have naturally, or it can be moved about from one area to another.

Weakness of Bureaus

Pertinent to the anxieties of such citizens concerned about the effects of the manipulation of the weather is the report of two members of a panel which gave attention to the possibilities of assessing and controlling technology. These scientists, Harvey Brooks and Raymond Bowers, wrote for the February 1970 *Scientific American* an article which detailed the problems of this sort of control. In one place they said:

The assessment of technology that is done by government agencies is . . . profoundly affected by the legal system. The predominant mission of each agency, as set forth in the law, determines the pattern of assessing technology. Weather modification provides an example. The Bureau of Reclamation looks for ways to increase rainfall in the dry Western states. The Department of Agriculture, mainly concerned with reducing crop losses, sponsors research in suppressing storm damage. The Federal Aviation Administration is interested in ways to dissipate fogs that hang over airports. None of these agencies considers the total effects. In the case of regulatory agencies, limitations by law often prevent the agency from considering the complete problem. . . .

Tools Missing

The achievement of a better system for assessing technology faces major obstacles. The society is ill-equipped to handle con-

> flicting interests. It does not know how to value in a quantitative way such goals as a clean environment and the preservation of future choices. Analytical tools are primitive, and crucial knowledge is often missing.

The moral, here, should be plain. What these writers say is in effect the reason for the priority of the First Object, that of Brotherhood, in the aims of the Theosophical Movement. Without a concern for "the complete problem," the welfare of *all,* there can be no way of dissolving the conflicts of interests, so that greater technical knowledge would only make confusion worse confounded. The moral foundation for human progress is here declared by the technologists or scientists themselves, if only by implication.

Living Clouds?

A further discussion of the complexities lying behind the phenomenon of rainfall is provided by Bruce C. Parker's article, "Life in the Sky," in *Natural History* (October, 1970). His experiments led him to suspect that some kinds of clouds are ideal environments for the metabolism of microorganisms in systems analogous to those in the soils and waters on earth. He postulates that an exchange of nutrients takes place between earth and sky—gases and volatile organic substances released by plants being drawn into the atmosphere in addition to dust particles. These, he thinks, metabolize in the conditions provided by cloud masses, and return to earth in altered form with the rain.

Floating Ecosystems?

Although Dr. Parker is cautious about conclusions, his investigations indicate that a more thorough knowledge of the natural processes which keep the earth habitable would be safer and more profitable than military or commercial exploitation of our scanty skill in cloud-seeding. He sums up by saying:

> Admittedly we are perhaps a long way from demonstrating directly that clouds are living microbial ecosystems in the sense of lakes or soils. We know only that some clouds contain viable microorganisms, that these microorganisms need not necessarily be in resting or dormant stages to survive, and that the physical and chemical properties of some clouds should, in theory, afford environments compatible with growth and metabolism of some microorganisms. The vitamin B_{12} apparently produced in some clouds hints that something is in fact going on.
>
> In the absence of direct evidence, the idea that clouds are living ecosystems must remain hypothetical, but the search for

such evidence should receive more than passing interest, however, because an understanding of the biology of clouds could have considerable impact on other areas. For example, clouds may play significant roles in the dispersal of microorganisms and chemicals. Some of the microorganisms may be pathogens, and consequently involve the mechanisms of the spread of disease. The chemicals may be of natural origin, such as the vitamins now known to occur in some rains in significant concentrations. Also, synthetic chemicals may occur in clouds. Such pesticides as DDT have already been detected in some rains and associated with airborne dust. We know also that levels of DDT no greater than those reported from such rains can inhibit photosynthesis in marine phytoplankton.

In view of the vast cosmogony presented by H. P. Blavatsky in her Secret Doctrine, it seems that the idea of the universe as an aggregate of intelligences in infinite variety and gradation, governed by the principle of periodicity, provides not only a practical basis for investigation of natural processes, but an indispensable guide in avoiding blunders of global extent.

"What Is Real?"

Patrick Merla contrasts the current fiction for adults with that for children in the *Saturday Review* (Nov. 4, 1972), observing that graphic realism characterizes much of the fare being read by children and young people, while their elders are turning to fantasy. Mr. Merla says that many of the books for young people dealing with poverty, sex, mental illness and death, are "intensely moving, unforgettable accounts of people we can care about. At their best they are open-ended, like life itself. They do not pretend to have answers to questions that puzzle even adults. In some ways they are among the most advanced books available today." On the other hand, he believes that adults are not interested in fantasy solely as an escape, but because the world of fantasy lends credence to another kind of reality than the one they have found inadequate. Mr. Merla finds a common ground in these seemingly diverse interests in the fact that the books that hold the attention of young and old alike are those which are asking in one way or another, "What is real?" He reminds the reader that the possibilities of nuclear war and ecological disaster are more threatening to many people because more comprehensive, both in time and area, than the crises of earlier periods.

Unconscious Seeking

Because of this, he finds an optimistic import in the current tastes

in modern fiction. He concludes by saying—

> It seems to me that we are living at a moment in history when people are consciously seeking answers to problems of existence, not out of idle philosophical speculation, but because it is imperative to find them if we are to continue to live. We have not found any answers yet. But the current literary trends may be indicative of that search, and the paradox of "reality" for children versus "fantasy" for adults may be double-edged—children looking for facts to help them cope with an abrasive environment while adults probe a deeper, archetypal reality that can transform society altogether. A paradox not merely bemusing or amusing, but one that betokens a renascence of the wish to live humanely: a wealth of profound possibilities for mankind.

There is ample historical precedent for Mr. Merla's musings on the usefulness of adult fantasies. A book like Anthony West's *The Vintage,* an imaginative account of what happens after death, or the play *Outward Bound* by Sutton Vane, can lead the mind out of the confines of assumed physical reality. Without violating certain ground rules of human meaning, a good fantasy may open new vistas of awareness to the inquiring mind.

The Images Created by "the Media"

In the *Atlantic* for last November, Robert Jay Lifton wrote of the "counterfeit universe" created by the propaganda machines in relation to the meaning of the Vietnam war—a universe which young American soldiers, when they get to Vietnam, find does not at all resemble the realities they are suddenly confronted with. Now, in the *American Scholar* for the Winter of 1972-73, a professor of communications, George Gerbner, speaks of the "symbolic world" which is "totally invented," and which in this case is the result of the imagery of the mass media. This symbolic world is "entirely socially and culturally determined." Prof. Gerbner explains:

> A character in fiction dies not because he has lived but because it serves a purpose to have him die. Intended to or not, that purpose is the only reality of the story. The causal link is not between life and death but between a creator's or producing organization's position in life and society and the significance of that death. No TV badman ever dies a natural death, nor can the hero of a western serial be cut down in the prime of life. To be true to life in fiction would falsify the deeper truth of cultural and social values served by symbolic functions.

Ambiguous Portrait of Teachers

But Prof. Gerbner's interest is in the teachers—his title is "Teach-

r Image and the Hidden Curriculum." He devotes some twenty-even pages to contrasting the empty honors paid to the idea of the eacher with the more "realistic" assessment of the teaching profes-ion and activity as found in the various media of entertainment—the lms, television, and low-grade fiction. After presentation of a mass-ve amount of evidence, he says at the end:

> The most enduring and pervasive images of teachers in American mass culture are those that humiliate and depress them. Failure in love and impotence in life permit them to be "good." Or they can be vigorous but evil, or perhaps only ridiculous. . . .
>
> Giving teachers a messianic mission and having schools soak up all the dreams and aspirations citizens have for their children doom the enterprise to failure. No social order can afford to make good such a promise. The illusion itself contains the seeds of the noble-but-impractical image. It becomes only reasonable to show teachers full of goodness, but sapped of vitality and power. Turn on the power and the impotent figure becomes a monster, only confirming the doubts and suspicions inherent in the ambivalent image.

A Study in Contradiction

He is suggesting here that the image of the teacher in the American opular conception is really a schizophrenic figure—he is a double nage reflecting the hypocrisy of the age in which we live. However, rof. Gerbner does not pillory society; rather, he seems at one point hold teachers responsible for collaborating in this great, social elf-deception:

> American media scholars symbolize the promise of learning on behalf of noble and idealistic goals, and undercut that promise by being strange, weak and foolish, and generally unworthy of the support of the community. The "hidden curriculum" cultivates the illusion of social reform through education and, at the same time, helps to pave the way for the perennial collapse of its achievement. As things work out in the symbolic realm, the bankruptcy of the schools is their own fault. The invidious distinction between teaching and doing is maintained. The promise of a productive society to place the cultivation of a distinctly human self-consciousness highest on the scale of its priorities is again betrayed.

Prof. Gerbner sees little hope of lasting educational reform until ese processes of false reassurance and deception are understood, mitted, and a new beginning is made. There are of course teachers o struggle against both these false images, but apparently not ough of them.

Astral Light?

From the Theosophical outlook, one might see in Prof. Gerbner's analysis a kind of coarse representation of the function of the astral light, which forms a record of the grosser thoughts, feelings, and motives of the personal natures of all men. Such a portrait is a tool of diagnosis, yet the knowledge so obtained does little to stir the kind of change that obviously is needed. There are two ways to eliminate hypocrisy: one is in the practice of an honest barbarism which cares nothing for either culture or learning, and refuses to pretend a concern with "the higher things" of life. The other way is to reject pretense and refuse the rewards of pretense, and honor only that learning which has a moral foundation. How long, one wonders, will the brilliant studies of the mind of the times, often to be found in the pages of the *American Scholar* and other serious journals, stop at the stage of diagnosis, as though nothing further could be added?

The Faithful Few

This is indeed the Kali Yuga. The teacher ought to be the most truly respected member of the community, and is so regarded during periods of history when values are not inverted and devotion to the good of others is acknowledged to be the highest social ideal. The spirit of the Golden Age is embodied in the Theosophical philosophy, and when that system of ideas and ideals once again becomes the foundation of thought, teachers will have the respect they deserve. Meanwhile, the teachers who remain true to the noble meaning of their calling are surely the greatest human treasures that a society can possess.